

REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested for claims 1, 3, and 5-6. Favorable action is requested for new claims 7-9. Claims 2 and 4 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Independent claims 1, 5, and 6 have been amended. The subject matter relating to the processor is not new matter and is disclosed at, e.g., paragraph 76.

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 04-239604 in view of JP 10-321457. Claim 1 defines a manufacturing apparatus for manufacturing electronic monolithic ceramic components, the manufacturing apparatus comprising a sheet supplier for supplying a plurality of types of ceramic green sheets in a predetermined order, the sheet supplier including a plurality of trays, each tray being adapted to hold at least one ceramic green sheet, the plurality of ceramic green sheets being held in the plurality of trays according to type, a rack for vertically aligning the plurality of trays, and a tray drawer device for drawing trays from the rack according to a predetermined order, a laminator for laminating the plurality of ceramic green sheets supplied by the sheet supplier, a conveyor device for picking up a single ceramic green sheet from a drawn tray and conveying the single ceramic green sheet to the laminator, a processor unit adapted receive data concerning at least a type, an order in lamination, and a quantity of ceramic green sheets necessary for a laminate for a desired electronic monolithic component, the sheet supplier including a drive for driving the rack to be raised and lowered in a vertical direction, and the tray drawer device being arranged to draw a particular tray from the rack when, as a result of the rack being at least one of raised and lowered by the drive, the particular tray is positioned at a predetermined height.

The apparatus of claim 1 offers various advantages including providing a simple apparatus that occupies a minimal amount of space.

JP 04-239604 does not disclose or suggest the combination of features of claim 1 including a plurality of trays, each tray being adapted to hold at least one ceramic green sheet, the plurality of ceramic green sheets being held in the plurality of trays according to type, a rack for vertically aligning the plurality of trays, and a tray drawer device for drawing trays from the rack according to a predetermined order, together with a drive for driving the rack to be raised and lowered in a vertical direction, and the tray drawer device being arranged to draw a particular tray from the rack when, as a result of the rack being at least one of raised and lowered by the drive, the particular tray is positioned at a predetermined height.

JP 10-321457 does not cure the defects of JP 04-239604. The magazines in the sheet stocker are arranged in three tiers in the vertical direction and in eight lines in a circumferential direction. Ceramic green sheets are drawn up-and-down movement of a sheet ejection device and rotation of the sheet stocker. This does not provide the combination of features of claim 1 including a plurality of trays, each tray being adapted to hold at least one ceramic green sheet, the plurality of ceramic green sheets being held in the plurality of trays according to type, a rack for vertically aligning the plurality of trays, and a tray drawer device for drawing trays from the rack according to a predetermined order, together with a drive for driving the rack to be raised and lowered in a vertical direction, and the tray drawer device being arranged to draw a particular tray from the rack when, as

a result of the rack being at least one of raised and lowered by the drive, the particular tray is positioned at a predetermined height.

In view of the differences between claim 1 and JP 04-239604 in view of JP 10-321457, and further in view of the advantages available through the apparatus of claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and the claims dependent therefrom, claim 3, define patentably over the cited references.

Claims 5 and 6 offer advantages similar to those available through claim 1, discussed above. Like claim 1, each recites a combination of features including a plurality of trays, each tray being adapted to hold at least one ceramic green sheet, the plurality of ceramic green sheets being held in the plurality of trays according to type, a rack for vertically aligning the plurality of trays, and a tray drawer device for drawing trays from the rack according to a predetermined order, together with a drive for driving the rack to be raised and lowered in a vertical direction, and the tray drawer device being arranged to draw a particular tray from the rack when, as a result of the rack being at least one of raised and lowered by the drive, the particular tray is positioned at a predetermined height which is not disclosed or suggested by the cited references.

In view of the differences between claims 5 and 6 and JP 04-239604 in view of JP 10-321457, and further in view of the advantages available through the apparatus of claims 5 and 6, it is respectfully submitted that claims 5 and 6 define patentably over the cited references.

New claims 7-9 depend from claims 1, 5, and 6, respectively, and recite that the rack moves substantially entirely along a single axis. The apparatus defined by these claims offers advantages including space efficiency.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims, claims 1, 3, and 5-9, are in condition for allowance. Allowance is cordially urged.

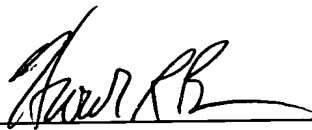
If the Examiner should be of the opinion that a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 5, 2003

By: _____



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